

FACT SHEET:

Assyrians and the Turkey-PKK Conflict in Iraq

OVERVIEW

In 2020, the Turkish government intensified its decades-long military campaign targeting the militant Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) along the Iraqi-Turkish border with little regard for the negative impact on civilian populations. Turkish airstrikes targeting suspected PKK positions in today's Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI) often occur in close proximity to areas inhabited by Assyrians, resulting in significant consequences.

The PKK continues to endanger civilian populations by operating from or near civilian areas, carrying out attacks on Turkey and Turkish military bases in the KRI, thus making them consistent targets for Turkish offensives.

The Assyrians of northern Iraq have found themselves in the crossfire between two powerful actors embroiled in a conflict in which Assyrians have no part. Due to the long-term nature of this conflict and the inaction from government authorities, many Assyrians in affected villages have resigned themselves to the idea that change is unlikely. The longer the conflict drags on, the greater the danger to the existential security of the Assyrians.

53⁺

The API has documented 53 incidents of airstrikes that occurred near Assyrian areas in 2020, but has concluded that the actual number is higher.

HARM CAUSED TO ASSYRIANS

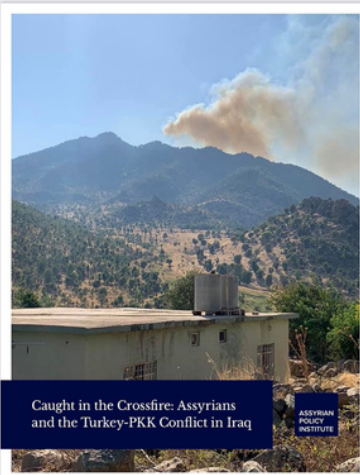
- Endangerment of civilian life
- Forced displacement
- Traumatization and feelings of insecurity
- Destruction of property and infrastructure
- Destruction of farmlands and livestock
- Harm to livelihoods, especially for farmers
- Exacerbation of other hardships

AFFECTED AREAS

AFFECTED AREAS	# OF STRIKES IN 2020*
Barwar region (Amediya, Duhok)	31
Zakho District (Duhok)	11
Sapna Valley (Amediya, Duhok)	9
Nahla Valley (Amediya/Akre, Duhok)	2

Duhok

Erbil



Caught in the Crossfire: Assyrians and the Turkey-PKK Conflict in Iraq

Learn more in our report
[Caught in the Crossfire.](#)